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THE ASIAN AGE

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WINDOWS

Cricketer M.S. Dhoni gets make-up for a shooting at Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Thursday. — PTI

I-T raids on 187 premises, TTV cries 'conspiracy'

Chennai: Income-tax sleuths on Thursday carried out simultaneous multi-city raids on 187 premises including those linked to sidelined AIADMK leaders V.K. Sasikala and her nephew T.T.V. Dhinakaran and Tamil television channel Jaya TV over suspected tax evasion. Mr Dhinakaran, the deposed AIADMK deputy general secretary, condemned as a "conspiracy" the searches undertaken by the Income-tax department.

Full report on Page 2

Ryan case: CBI to recreate scene

New Delhi: A day after apprehending a Class 11 student of Ryan International School in Gurgaon for allegedly killing seven-year-old Pradyuman Thakur of the same school, the CBI on Thursday took the accused to a "certain place" for corroborating his statement.

Full report on Page 14

Alphons elected unopposed to RS

Jaipur: MoS for tourism and BJP leader K.J. Alphons was elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha from Rajasthan in a bypoll on Thursday. The seat fell vacant after M. Venkaiah Naidu's election as the vice-president on August 5.

Full report on Page 4

COUNTERPOINT

Enjoy... thrash the comman man black and blue. We can't do that with VIPs!

WEATHER

Max: 30°C
Min: 14°C
RH: 48%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Dense fog

ASTROGUIDE

Hemalaba: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Karthika Bahula Saptami till 2.54 pm
Star: Pushyami 12.28 pm
Varjyam: 12.53 am to 2.26 am (Saturday)
Durmuhurtam: 8.37 am to 9.22 am; 12.22 pm to 1.07 pm
Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12 noon

SUNSET TODAY 5.30 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.39 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 11.45 PM
MOONSET TODAY 12.31 PM

PM to attend Asean Nov. 14; 'Quad' meet on sidelines?

Modi may meet Trump in Manila

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 9

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi travels to Manila on Sunday to attend the Asean-India and East Asia Summits on November 14, there are indications that a meeting of foreign ministry officials at the joint secretary level between India, Japan, the United States and Australia is likely to be held on the sidelines. In the face of China's increasing military assertiveness, Japan has already proposed that a "quadrilateral" comprising the four nations be formed to discuss various issues in the Asia-Pacific region.

New Delhi has already indicated it is open to any opportunity to work with "like-minded" nations but sources warned that any such meeting should not be seen as an intention to join the "quadrilateral" as yet. India may, however, be inching towards joining such a consultation process, specially as it has already pointed out it is part of several trilateral discussions with various countries.

Prime Minister Modi will attend the 15th Asean-India Summit and the 12th East Asia Summit on November 14. In the context of growing global religious extremism and terrorism, Mr Modi may discuss the issue of de-radicalisation with Asean leaders, sources indicated. Economic issues including trade and investment are also expected to be discussed in detail. Mr Modi will

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Will talk to Pak under terror-free atmosphere: MEA

Britain's Prince Charles with actress Shilpa Shetty at a reception hosted by the British high commissioner to celebrate the UK-India bilateral relationship in New Delhi on Thursday. — PTI

'Heavy turnout indicates anti-incumbency'

74% vote in Himachal, highest in state polls

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 9

Himachal Pradesh on Thursday recorded its highest-ever voter turnout of over 74 per cent in a possible indication towards a regime change in the hill state. Counting will take place after 40 days on December 18 along with that of Gujarat where polling is scheduled to take place on December 9 and 14.

The hill state, which has largely witnessed a bipolar polity, has had a Congress government for the last five years and there are indications that the BJP might storm to power this time. According to pollsters, a high turnout indicates anti-incumbency.

Except in 1998, the hill state has always given a decisive verdict. That year both Congress and BJP were tied at 31 seats each in the 68-member Assembly.

In the outgoing Assembly, the Congress and the BJP have 35 and 28 MLAs respectively. There are four Independent MLAs while one seat was vacant.

While the Congress and the BJP are contesting all 68 seats, the BSP is contesting 42 seats, the CPI(M) 14, Swabhiman Party and Lok Gathbandhan Party six each and the CPI 3.

In a high-voltage campaign which lasted nearly two weeks, star campaigners of both parties held over 450 rallies. Mr Modi and BJP president Amit Shah addressed six rallies each, while Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi addressed three.

The BJP made corruption its main poll plank, targeting chief minister Virbhadra Singh, while the Congress focussed on the ill effects of demonetisation and hasty

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(Left) Former Himachal chief minister Prem Kumar Dhumal and his son, MP Anurag Thakur, after casting their votes at a polling booth in Hamirpur on Thursday. (Right) Himachal CM Virbhadra Singh with wife Pratibha after casting their votes in Rampur. — PTI

SC takes up petition on 'bribe' to judges

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 9

In an unprecedented move to probe allegations of corruption in the highest court, the Supreme Court on Thursday referred to a Constitution Bench a plea alleging bribes were taken using names of apex court judges on the promise of securing favourable settlement of a case.

"The charges are not only serious but sensitive not only for the judiciary but for the nation," the SC bench said.

The court fixed a hearing on November 13 before a five-member Constitution Bench while entertaining a PIL, filed by lawyer Kamini Jaiswal, seeking a probe by an SIT into the "disturbing" facts in a CBI FIR hinting at corruption in the top court. The FIR was filed over alleged medical admission scam involving retired Orissa HC judge I.M. Quddusi.

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Women, mobikes exempt

'Odd-even' for 5 days in Delhi from Monday

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 9

As Delhi-NCR woke up to a thick layer of smog for the third successive day, the Delhi government on Thursday announced the rollout of the odd-even car rationing scheme for five days from November 13 as part of a graded response plan (GRAP) to tackle toxic air.

The third chapter of the odd-even scheme will impose curbs on vehicles between 8 am and 8 pm and exempt women drivers, two-wheelers and vehicles carrying children in school uniforms and VVIPs, said Delhi transport minister Kailash Gahlot.

Violation of the restrictions will invite a penalty of ₹2,000, he said, on a day when all schools remained shut due to bad air.

The minister said that CNG vehicles with valid stickers will be exempted from the cubrs. The 22 IGL gas stations across the city will start distributing CNG stickers from 2 pm on Friday.

"The CNG stickers which were issued in the last edition of odd-even will also be valid," the minister said.

Violation of the restrictions will invite a penalty of ₹2,000, Delhi transport minister Kailash Gahlot said, on a day when all schools remained shut due to bad air

He also announced plans to check overcharging by app-based cabs during the odd-even. "I have called a meeting with representatives of Ola and Uber on Friday to ensure that there is no surge pricing," Mr Gahlot said.

On Thursday, the air quality index, as per Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), was recorded at 486 indicating "severe" levels of pollution, dangerously close to the 500-mark that reflects a pollution "emergency".

The minister said the Delhi Transport Corporation has been directed to hire 500 buses from private contractors to tackle the rush of commuters during the odd-even week.

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GST COUNCIL MEET SET TO BE STORMY TODAY

MANOJ ANAND
GUWAHATI, NOV. 9

Amid confusion, the crucial Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council meeting got off to a dramatic start Thursday with Assam Congress leaders registering a strong protest at the venue, demanding rollback of indirect taxes on various products and changes in the 28 per cent tax slab.

GST officers across states met here Thursday to reach consensus on key issues and lay the foundation for the ministerial-level meeting to be chaired by Union finance minister Arun Jaitley on Friday. Sources said Friday's meeting will be a stormy one as Congress-ruled states' finance ministers have formulated a joint strategy.

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PLAN TO HASTEN WORK ON 27 ROADS NEAR CHINA

ANIMESH SINGH
NEW DELHI, NOV. 9

Within months of the Doklam standoff ending on August 29, the government plans to expedite construction of 27 roads, measuring 800 km, on the India-China border to strengthen infrastructure in the sensitive region.

While eight out of these 27 roads have almost been completed, the home ministry plans to send a proposal to the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) for advancing the deadline for the ₹1,900 cr project spread across Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, sources said.

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Hardik skips Sibal's meeting ■ Patels to consult lawyers

Cong offers 3 quota options to Patidars

Ahmedabad, Nov. 9: The Congress has given three options to the Hardik Patel-led Patidar Anamat Andolan Samiti (PAAS) with respect to the latter's quota demand for its community, even as members of the influential Patel organisation said that they will consult their leaders and legal experts before taking a decision.

The possible quota options were conveyed to PAAS members by former Union minister and senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal at a meeting which started at 11.30 pm on Wednes-day and ended at about 2 am. Hardik Patel did not attend the meeting.

GUJARAT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

"We have been given three options by the Congress on how to provide reservation to our community in educational institutions and government jobs," PAAS convener Dinesh Bambhania said after the meeting.

Mr Sibal said, "We have discus-sed all the aspects and will do all the things (to provide reservation to the Patidar community) as per the Constitution."

Mr Bambhania said, "The options that have been given by the Congress will be kept confidential till we discuss it with Hardik, community leaders and legal experts. If the community accepts the demand, we will convey it accordingly to the Congress."

"The Congress proposal has not touched 49 per cent reservations for SC, ST and OBC which exist in the state. The options that have been given are over and above it," he

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Can't end corruption overnight: Debroy

KISHOR DWIVEDI
NEW DELHI, NOV. 9

Eliminating corruption and weeding out black money from the economy will not happen overnight but the process has begun, said Bibek Debroy, chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister.

The noted economist and Niti Aayog member made these remarks while talking about a new book, *On the Trail of the Black: Tracking Corruption*, that he has edited along with Kishore Arun Desai, an officer on special duty (OSD) at Niti Aayog.

Mr Debroy, 62, said that some people, for almost seven decades now, have lived with the "*chalta hai*" and "nothing will happen" attitude, and are now upset with the government.

"Now that things have started to happen, some people are upset. So I look at it positively, it (corruption and black money) is not a problem that will be solved overnight..." he said.

— PTI

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Priti Patel resigns over Israel row; PM May reshuffles team

ADITI KHANNA
LONDON, NOV. 9

Britain's seniormost Indian-origin minister Priti Patel has resigned from her Cabinet post over her unauthorised secret meetings with Israeli politicians while on a holiday in the Jewish country.

Penny Mordaunt, a former minister in the work and pensions department and an outspoken supporter of Brexit has replaced Priti Patel as international development secretary Ms Patel's position as international development minister had become increasingly untenable after it emerged that she had two further meetings with Israeli officials that were not disclosed through the proper procedure.

Priti Patel

The 45-year-old minister resigned late Wednesday after a meeting at Downing Street with Prime Minister Theresa May.

In her resignation, Ms Patel apologised and said her actions "fell below the standards of transparency and openness that I have promoted and advocated".

It follows a week of controversies around a dozen undisclosed meetings she had with Israelis, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

— PTI

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US President Donald Trump speaks to Chinese President Xi Jinping as US First Lady Melania Trump and Mr Xi's wife Peng Liyuan look on in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Thursday. **Report on Page 9** — AFP